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SUBJECT: GOB ENFORCES SUMMER BAN ON OUTDOOR LABOR

11. (U) Forty Ministry of Labor (MOL) inspectors fanned out across Bahrain July 1 to begin enforcing the annual ban on outdoor work during the hottest hours of the day. Employers can be fined up to USD 795 for each laborer found working outside between 1 and 4 p.m. During their first week, the inspectors levied 190 fines.

12. (SBU) Hassan Al Aradi (please protect), a workplace safety advocate and an officer of the Bahrain Health and Safety Society, an NGO, told poloff that unlike many other labor regulations in Bahrain, companies take the summer work ban seriously. Al Aradi said that the summer work ban was easier to enforce than other safety regulations since inspectors did not require significant training. By comparison, enforcement of regulations mandating the implementation of specific practices and the use of certain safety equipment required well-trained inspectors. (Note: The 2007 Human Rights Report highlighted the lack of trained labor inspectors as an obstacle to improved worker safety. End note.) According to Al Aradi, MOL achieved better than 80 percent compliance with the summer work ban in 2007, and its vigorous enforcement efforts appear to be continuing into 2008.

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